

REMARKS

Claims 1, 4-8, 10, 12-16, 21-24 and 35-46 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1 and 35 are amended, claims 43-46 are added, and claims 2, 3, 9, 17-20, 25-28 and 30-34 are canceled. Independent claim 1 is amended to correct an obvious typographical error therein. Independent claim 35 is amended to even more clearly distinguish over the applied references. Independent claim 43 is directed to an embodiment that is covered by allowed claim 1, and claims 44-46 depend from new independent claim 43. No new matter is added by the above amendments.

I. Information Disclosure Statement

The Examiner is requested to consider the reference, U.S. Patent No. 6,084,673, submitted with the attached Information Disclosure Statement.

II. All Pending Claim are in Condition for Allowance

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 1, 4-8, 10, 12-16 and 21-24.

Claims 2, 3, 9, 17-20, 25-28, 30-31 and 35 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 5,715,064 to Lin in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,523,843 to Yamane et al. In addition, claims 32-34 and 36-42 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Lin in view of Yamane et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,984,891 to Miyazaki et al. These rejections are moot with respect to cancelled claims 2, 3, 9, 17-20, 25-28 and 30-34. These rejections are respectfully traversed with respect to independent claim 35 and its dependent claims 36-42.

Neither Lin, Yamane et al. nor Miyazaki et al. discloses or suggests a first reflective member on a first side surface perpendicular to the first holding surface of a first movable stage, and a second reflective member on a second side surface perpendicular to the second holding surface of a second movable stage, as recited in independent claim 35. Accordingly, the applied references do not disclose or suggest all features recited in independent claim 35

and its dependent claims 36-42. Thus, claims 35-42 are patentable over the applied references for at least this reason.

Furthermore, the Office Action's reliance upon Yamane et al, appears to be misplaced because Yamane et al. does not relate to an arrangement in which a plurality of stages are used, or an arrangement in which first and second measurement beams have partially overlapping ranges. In Yamane et al., all interferometer beams always are emitted onto the mirrors of the single stage. Thus, Yamane et al. does not disclose or suggest the claim 35 second measurement system which measures positions of the first and second movable stages within a second measurement range partially overlapping the first measurement range.

In addition, Lin is a step-and-repeat system, rather than a scanning exposure apparatus as is recited in independent claim 35 and its dependent claims. Yamane et al. and Miyazaki et al. also do not indicate that their exposure apparatus are scanning exposure apparatus. Thus, neither Lin, Yamane et al. nor Miyazaki et al. discloses a scanning exposure apparatus as recited in claims 35-42.

Withdrawal of the rejections of claims 35-42 is requested.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 43, along with its dependent claims 44-46, are patentable over the references of record.

III. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further would be desirable to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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MAC/ccs

Attachments:

Petition for Extension of Time
Information Disclosure Statement

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